



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/780,708	02/19/2004	Bobbie J. Evans	22192.00	3197

7590 03/17/2005

Richard C. Litman  
LITMAN LAW OFFICES, LTD.  
P.O. Box 15035  
Arlington, VA 22215

EXAMINER
----------

SILBERMANN, JOANNE

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

3611

DATE MAILED: 03/17/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/780,708

Applicant(s)

EVANS, BOBBIE J.

Examiner

Joanne Silbermann

Art Unit

3611

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

## Attachment(s)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____. |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)  | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____. | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____.  |

**DETAILED ACTION**

Claim 3 contains the trademark/trade name PLEXIGLAS. Where a trademark or trade name is used in a claim as a limitation to identify or describe a particular material or product, the claim does not comply with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. See *Ex parte Simpson*, 218 USPQ 1020 (Bd. App. 1982). The claim scope is uncertain since the trademark or trade name cannot be used properly to identify any particular material or product. A trademark or trade name is used to identify a source of goods, and not the goods themselves. Thus, a trademark or trade name does not identify or describe the goods associated with the trademark or trade name. In the present case, the trademark/trade name is used to identify/describe transparent plastic and, accordingly, the identification/description is indefinite.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ernest et al. US #5,331,757.

3. Ernest et al. teach a holder including base 16 (Figure 4) in the form of an elongated block and having a groove formed in the top surface thereof. Transparent, clear plastic plates 12 and 14 fit snugly into the groove and form a slot therebetween for receiving a display. The plates are secured in the groove by means of insert 18.

Art Unit: 3611

4. Ernest et al. do not teach three slots for displays, however, it has been held that mere duplication of the essential working parts of a device involves only routine skill in the art. It would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art to utilize as few or as many slots as necessary to properly contain a desired display.

5. Ernest also does not teach using adhesive, however, this is considered to be a well known alternative. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to utilize adhesive to help retain the plates in the base, as is desired by Ernest et al.

6. Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ernest et al. as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Wang, US #6,553,695.

7. Ernest et al. do not teach a tag applied to the base, however, such tags are common in the art of displays. Wang teaches a display holder including tags 44 applied to the base. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to apply such tags to the display holder of Ernest et al. so as to personalize the display, or to make it more decorative, as is taught by Wang.

8. Claims 3, 4, 6 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ernest et al. in view of Wang and Davis, US #298,354.

9. Ernest et al. do not teach the base as being made from wood, however this is old and well known in the art. Davis teaches a base having a groove in the top surface wherein the base is made of wood (page 1 lines 51-52). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill to utilize wood to provide an additional decorative feature. Also, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill to utilize wood since it has been held to

Art Unit: 3611

be within the general skill of a worker in the art to select a known material on the basis of its suitability for the intended use as a matter of obvious design choice.

10. Ernest et al. (as modified) do not teach the particular size of the display, however it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill to make the holder any size necessary so that the desired display may be retained therein, since such a modification would have involved a mere change in the size of a component. A change in size is generally recognized as being within the level of ordinary skill in the art.

11. Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ernest et al. in view of Davis.

12. It would have been obvious to make the base from wood, as described previously.

### ***Conclusion***

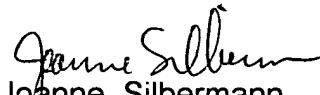
13. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. US patents 5513456 and 5625969 are cited as of interest.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Joanne Silbermann whose telephone number is 703-308-2091. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 5:30 - 2:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lesley Morris can be reached on 703-308-0629. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Art Unit: 3611

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

  
Joanne Silberman  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 3611

JS